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A REVIEWER ON THE COLONIES

In our Saturday's issue we took occasion to allude casually to some of the absurdities contained in the extracts from the Edinburgh Review which our morning contemporary called in to its assistance in running tilt against the "professional politicians." As the absurdities are by no means uncommon with half-informed English writers, such as the contributor to the Review evidently is, we think it not out of place to go more fully into the subject. We are told at the outset, with that quiet and dignified assumption, which only polished ignorance can don, that "there is one peculiarity in English society essential to the success of free institutions, which is not found to an equal degree in any foreign country, and is almost entirely wanting in the colonies. We mean the existence of an independent class of men combining wealth, leisure and intelligence, who are willing and even eager to devote their time and talents to the public service." Here we have a peculiarity "essential to the success of free institutions" existing in England, but "almost entirely wanting in the colonies." Now, if we asked the Reviewer what the "success of free institutions" meant, we should probably receive for an answer "the general prosperity of the country;" for that is the great object of all free government. To maintain his point, therefore, he would have to prove that the colonies were less prosperous than England. But the very opposite is the case. In the first place individual liberty is much greater in the colonies than in England; and, in the second, there is a much larger proportion of general comfort; the extremes of wealth and poverty—the curse of nearly every old country—being rarely or never felt. Whether, therefore, we look for the success of free institutions in the independent spirit of the people or in their material prosperity, we cannot but acknowledge that every British colony possessing responsible Government is infinitely ahead of the mother country. What then becomes of the proposition of the Reviewer? Why, as the colonies are more prosperous they must, according to his own line of argument, be better governed; for he makes the success of free institutions dependent on a certain class in the Government. But the colonies are wanting in the English element of "wealth, leisure and intelligence" ergo "wealth, leisure and intelligence" cannot be "peculiarly essential" to the "success of free institutions." So much for the reasoning powers of the Reviewer. There is a laughable ignorance of colonial life, however, displayed in his ideas of the class who have wealth and leisure, and who are eager for political position. If the writer had ever lived in the colonies he would have known that the most dangerous enemies to the public welfare, and consequently to the "success of free institutions," were the nearest approach to this very class. The land speculator in the early days of Canada, the squatter in Australia, and the holder of large tracts of uncultivated land generally throughout the colonies, will fully bear us out. The political artisan at five dollars a day would do infinitely more good and infinitely less injustice than the best of the speculative class in any of the colonies.

The next sentence of the Reviewer is on a par with the foregoing, and shows the writer's extensive colonial knowledge: "The amount of labor performed by Englishmen in public commissions, by the country magistracy and in a multitude of other modes without fee or reward is perfectly inconceivable. * * * Unfortunately for the colonies, no such class of men is to be found there." Did anyone ever read such unmitigated nonsense? Why,

we will be bound to say that there is a larger proportion of unpaid officials in the colonies than there is in England. Surely the writer must have got hold of that unfortunate communication of His Excellency bewailing the deplorable circumstance of there being no persons in the Comox or Cowichan districts able and willing to assume magisterial duties. Whether he did so or not, one thing he should learn of colonial justices of the peace. He should know that their want of wealth and leisure does not enable them to look upon offences like poaching as the greatest crimes in the calendar. A starving man, suspected of shooting a hare or pheasant, does not in their vulgar eyes require any number of weary months of involuntary servitude to teach him the duty he owes to the owner of the land.

ISLAND DIGGINGS.

Valuable Gold Discoveries!

Surface Diggings on the West Coast.

From 4 to 8 Cents to the Pan

Mr. Buttle's Report.

On Thursday afternoon our city was roused from its state of lethargy by the arrival of Mr McCausland, one of the Government exploring party from the West Coast, with despatches containing the important intelligence that rich and valuable diggings had been discovered on Bear River at the head of Clayoquot Sound.

Good news travels as quickly as bad, and in a very short space of time the whole community was alive with the excitement which the cheering nature of the announcement was calculated to create.

We have been subjected to so many periodical excitements that we are naturally prone to be sceptical, but the well-known integrity of the commander of the party, and the reliance reposed in everything emanating from him, sufficed to inspire confidence in the public mind and to assure us that there was no coloring in the facts furnished by him to the Government.

Mr. Buttle's report, copy of which has been obligingly handed to us by the Government, will be found below.

Mr. McCausland informs us that a prize-worthy desire on the part of the Commander to avoid undue excitement has induced him to understate rather than over estimate the richness of the gold field. Although he has put down the prospects obtained as yielding an average of from four to five cents to the pan, our informant has good reason for stating that a considerable portion of the country prospected gave from six to eight cents to the pan.

The mines are about ten miles above the mouth of Bear river, which flows into Bedwell Sound. There is deep water at the mouth of the river, and canoes can proceed without much difficulty a distance of about five miles up. Two or three rapids (impassable for boats) have to be stemmed, but Indians accomplish it with comparative ease. A portage of four or five miles is then all that is required to reach the diggings. The river is large and very free from cumbersome boulders except near its head-waters, and there are large bars and any quantity of gravel and dirt throughout the estimated six miles of paying ground. The principal formation of the surrounding country is granite—no slate, but numerous indications of quartz are visible. The position of the diggings and the nature of the ground will favor sluicing operations. Mr. McCausland is satisfied that there is a good show for several hundred men to find profitable employment on what has been already discovered, although the left bank of the river has not yet been tested, and there is every reason to suppose that fresh discoveries will yet be made. The only question to be solved will be the length or rather the shortness of the season when the country can be worked. About \$2 of coarse gold the washings of 30 pans, were brought to town. No scaley gold was found upon the left fork.

COMOX.

Visit of Amor DeCosmos, Esq., M.L.A.

On Friday, 4th inst., Amor DeCosmos, Esq., M.L.A., arrived from Nanaimo, and remained four days visiting the different inhabited sections and collecting facts, figures and opinions relating to the settlement. He was hospitably entertained by the Rev. Mr. Cave, and as he has been a strenuous supporter of agricultural interests generally, and an advocate of the interests of Comox particularly, the settlers held a public meeting at the Mission House on Monday evening, and presented him with the following address through the chairman, Mr. Cave:

Regretting that they are not in a position to give you such a welcome as so able an advocate of their interests deserves, they beg to assure you that the sentiments of admiration and respect which they entertain towards you are not the less real that they are unaccompanied by parade.

Comox has hitherto been considered by the authorities in Victoria as too remote and insignificant a district to deserve more than a passing notice, and it is most cheering to us that a gentleman who must have incessant demands on his time, as he gathers within the compass of an ample intelligence every question of foreign and home policy, protecting the commerce, maintaining the honor, and fostering the institutions of the State, should combine attention to what is grand and momentous, with attention to what is comparatively unimportant, and find time amid the multiplicity of affairs which solicit his attention, to extend his researches to this secluded valley.

Your hearty manner, good sense, facility of expression and advocacy of liberal principles have made you a general favorite. We have observed that when connected with the Press you always acted a thoroughly independent part, and carrying the same spirit into the Legislative Assembly you have had your share of abuse and misrepresentation—missiles which little minds are privileged to throw at great ones. But in heeding the opposition raised by interested or unenlightened parties you have nobly struggled on, and although some of the fruits of your labors during the past year have been blasted we feel that though cast down you are not destroyed, and that next session will find you if possible more determined than before to wrest the rights of the people from those who would withhold them.

As we are without a representative we commend Comox to your favorable notice and trust that while you discharge your other arduous duties with exemplary fidelity, and have an eye on every wheel in the machinery of government you will especially attend to the interests of this settlement. That success may so crown your efforts that Victoria may increase in prosperity, the mineral resources of the Island be developed, and agriculture flourish throughout the colony is the earnest wish of the inhabitants of Comox.

Mr. DeCosmos replied in fitting terms, and expressed his readiness to assist us in any matter for the benefit of the settlement. Various questions were then put to the hon. gentleman referring to the policy of the country—Union, Tariff, Free Schools, Home-stead and Franchise Acts, and especially the enfranchisement of Comox—which were lucidly answered and explained.

He also described the trail between Comox and Nanaimo as pretty rough, caused chiefly by fallen timber, and estimates that about two hundred dollars would again open it to traffic.

THE BIG BEND COUNTRY.

(From the Columbian.)

The following letter, written at Fort Kamloops on the 30th ult., by Mr. Ladner, and which has been kindly placed at our disposal by W. J. Armstrong, Esq. of this city, will afford some interesting information respecting a section of the country which is attracting considerable interest just now:

"I arrived here this morning after rather a longer trip than I expected. I took longer going, but I made up for it in coming back. I left Columbia River on the 26th inst., and came to the head of Shuswap Lake on foot in two days, and should have come here last evening had it not been for the heavy head winds which detained me several hours. * * * We are going to try and take the train and some beef cattle to the new diggings. I saw enough to satisfy me that there was sufficient to justify us in doing so. The road is very bad, so much so that there will have to be a great deal of work done before we can get through. I wrote a few lines to Moberly who has gone to the South Arm of the Lake to explore, requesting him to help us to get through, which I think he will do.

There are two places that prospect very good. One is Carnies Creek, about 20 miles below "Death Rapids," the other about 20 miles above on a tributary of Gold Creek, called French Creek. It is two miles below where the old Indian trail strikes the Columbia River. They prospect very good indeed, although there has not been much gold taken out yet as the freshets came on so soon after they were started. I saw a number of men that I knew, and they all agreed that it is from 250 to 300 miles from the diggings to the line, and they restate a number of hair-breadth escapes, and a number did lose their boots and goods. They appear to think that if once there is a road opened this way that it is bound to take the trade of that part of the country; but I think the Government should try and open a pack trail that would be passable until they see whether there is enough to justify them in making a wagon road. It is reported here that there has been an arrangement made between the Hudson Bay Co. and the Government that if the former will put on a steamer the latter will build a wagon road. As to their being a steamer built on the Columbia River it is all bosh. There is some machinery at the Dalles, and a part of the lumber sawed at Colville Mills, that would do to build a steamer, but that is all that's done."

What Sheridan said of wine may be applied to joking—the best to enjoy is that which you crack at another person's expense.

The ancient cooks carried their arts to the most whimsical perfection. They were able to serve up a whole pig boiled on one side and roasted on the other.

Those who feed on slander are always hungry.

REPORT.

Bedwell Sound, 7th August, 1865.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary,
Sir,
I have the gratification to report for the information of His Excellency that gold has been found in payable quantities on the left fork of Bear River, Bedwell Sound.

TELEGRAPHIC NEWS.—We received no dispatches from New Westminster on Saturday the wires being reported down again in Washington Territory owing to the bush fires always prevalent at this time of the year. The only item of news received by the Columbian is the following announcement under date New York, July 15th, taken from Denver papers of the 23d: Matamoros advises of the 8th from Imperial sources state that the Mexican Republicans under Negrette had finally been effectually scattered. They had been disbanded, and a number of them had taken refuge in Texas. The indications of approaching trouble between forces in Texas and the Imperialists were increasing.